

Kentucky Teacher

November 2003

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

www.education.ky.gov



Photo by Rick McComb

Proceeding to read

Trunnell Elementary Title I teacher Jackye Mays integrates reading and social studies lessons for her early primary class as they study about the Lewis and Clark expedition. "We Proceeded On With Lewis & Clark" is a three-year school-wide study that takes students at this Jefferson County school on the famous explorers' journey through this country's western frontier. Find out more about this program on Page 8.

High school teachers surprised by Milken Award

By Lisa Y. Gross

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Rebecca Coleman, a reading/English/language arts teacher at Whitesburg High School in Letcher County, and Keith Embry, a mathematics teacher at Oldham County High School, are Kentucky's latest recipients of the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award. The award recognizes elementary and secondary

school teachers, principals and other education professionals. It includes a financial award of \$25,000.

Both teachers were notified of their selection as Milken Educators on Oct. 15 when Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit, Gov. Paul Patton and representatives of the Milken Family Foundation visited their schools.

Coleman has taught for seven years. She is described by a col-

league as someone who "does not seek recognition for her accomplishments."

According to information provided on her nomination form, Coleman is noted for integrating technology into her lesson plans, her involvement with school council committees and her contribution to higher overall school achievement in writing. She is a graduate of Pikeville College.

See **MILKEN** on Page 9

Midpoint CATS results show school progress

By Lisa Y. Gross

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Scores from the Kentucky Core Content Tests given to students in the spring of 2003 generally show progress when compared to past-years' data. The Kentucky Department of Education released the scores to the public in October. Statewide, school and district results are posted on the department's Web site.

Go to www.education.ky.gov, and enter "#2003 CATS results" in the keyword/search box.

While all trend data is short-term, schools appear to be making progress in each subject area and grade. The gains are encouraging, particularly in the basic core content areas.

"The data from our core content tests parallel what we've seen in other academic measures

such as CTBS, NAEP and ACT — slow, steady progress overall," said Kentucky Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit. "As in the past, our elementary schools are the high-achievers, but middle and high schools are not far behind.

"When I look at the specific subject areas, writing scores are

See **CATS** on Page 9

Wanted: Comments from Kentucky teachers on vertically aligned core content

By Faun S. Fishback

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Kentucky teachers have the opportunity to comment on the vertical alignment of Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment from the end of primary (3rd grade) through 8th grade in reading and mathematics before new tests items are developed for the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). This vertical alignment is critically important as more grades are tested as part of Kentucky's compliance with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

The vertical alignment tells teachers what content will be assessed at each grade level in both content areas. It also helps teachers share the responsibility of scaffolding instruction to

build skills and knowledge from one grade to the next.

The vertically aligned core content is posted on the Department of Education's Web site for comment by teachers across the state. Teachers can view the new alignments three different ways: reading and mathematics content together, by grade level in mathematics or by skill and strategy in reading. The Web address is www.education.ky.gov. Enter "#ccfeedback" in the keyword/search box.

Currently, Kentucky Core Content Tests assess reading in grades 4, 7 and 10. Mathematics is assessed in grades 5, 8 and 11. The core content for these grades has not changed.

Beginning in spring 2005,

See **WANTED** on Page 10

KY Net provides authentic audience for student writing

By Cathy Lindsey

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Kentucky teachers and students now have the opportunity to reach beyond the limits of traditional classrooms to build a community of learners.

KY Net is an electronic classroom exchange program designed to help teachers and students use technology more creatively in class. The instructional use of the e-mail system is designed to provide a statewide pool of resources for classrooms.

"The main reason for the program is so that Kentucky teachers can have a network to share work, writing and ideas," said Tim Miller, KY Net state facilitator and 5th-grade teacher from Worthington Elementary (Raceland Independent).

Not only does the concept reduce teacher isolation, it also gives students interaction with an authentic audience for their writing exercises. By sharing student work via e-mail, stu-

dents have the opportunity to create real and meaningful communication.

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Bulletin Board



Conference Connection

Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference

March 4-6, 2004

Many workshops and sessions are being planned for the 2004 Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference (KTLC) in Louisville. Information about all events will be posted on the conference Web site in December. A copy of the registration brochure will be included in the December/January issue of *Kentucky Teacher*.

On the Web: www.kentuckytlc.org

Events

Kentucky History Center

"Joining the Ranks: African Americans in the Military" is on display now through Feb. 28, 2004, at the Kentucky History Center in Frankfort. This exhibition features individuals, events and stories of the African American military experience from the Civil War through Desert Storm.

On the Web: www.history.ky.gov/Museums/Changing_Exhibits.htm

Stage One performances

Stage One: Louisville Children's Theatre has two productions scheduled Nov. 17-Dec. 19 especially for school groups. Teaching materials are available on the theatre's Web site to accompany both plays. Reservations also can be made online, and bus subsidies are available.

"The Velveteen Rabbit," adapted by Gail Fairbank-Roch, is appropriate for preschool through exiting primary students. Performances will be at the Armory Street Theater.

"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," written by Barbara Robinson, will appeal to students from exiting primary through 10th grade. Performances will be at the Kentucky Center Bombard Theatre.

On the Web: www.stageone.org
Contact: Box office at (502) 589-5946

'Corduroy' takes stage in December

The Theatre for Children at The Thoroughbred Center in Lexington will present "Corduroy," an adaptation of Don Freeman's popular children's book, Dec. 4 and 5. Performances for school groups will be at 10 a.m. and noon both days.

The production will be performed by members of Theatreworks USA, a professional touring company from New York.

Tickets are \$4.50. A complimentary ticket is given with every 10 purchased tickets. Teachers receive a study guide to prepare students for the performance.

On the Web: www.TheThoroughbredCenter.com/theatre

Contact: Stacy Thurman, (859) 293-1853, sthurman@thethoroughbredcenter.com

Resources

Online calendar

Do you want to know what's happening and when? Do you have an event of state-wide interest you want to promote? Then, visit the Kentucky Department of Education's Master Calendar of Events on the Internet. The calendar makes it easy for educators and the general public to keep track of important professional development opportunities, conferences and other events.

On the Web: www.education.ky.gov and click on "Calendars"

Contact: JoAnna Crim, (502) 564-3421, jcrim@kde.state.ky.us

Virtual high school adult courses

The Kentucky Virtual High School has set the following dates for next semester's (spring 2004) professional development and school improvement courses for Kentucky educators and parents:

- Registration deadline: Jan. 16
- Classes begin: Jan. 12
- Classes end: Feb. 29

On the Web: www.kvhs.org

Contact: Bob Fortney (866) 432-0008 (toll free), bfortney@kde.state.ky.us

'Our Documents: Teacher Sourcebook'

A new resource guide depicting 100 of the most important documents in our nation's history is available online for teachers. The 80-page resource guide has 100 milestone documents appearing on a timeline. Descriptions tell how each document is important. The guide provides discussion on key themes — rights and responsibilities, individuals and society, state and federal power, and commerce and regulation. An essay recounts what happened at the Constitutional Convention. Three lesson plans provide in-depth studies of Thomas Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase, Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison, and Brown v. Board of Education.

On the Web: www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?page=sourcebook2

Save your receipts for tax deduction

Educators in public or private elementary and secondary schools who work at least 900 hours during a school year can qualify for a tax deduction of up to \$250 for the purchase of books and classroom

supplies. Save receipts for any purchases during 2003 to report those educator expense deductions.

On the Web: www.irs.gov/taxtopics/page/0,,id%3D105560,00.html

Fine arts grants available

The National Education Association (NEA) and The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education are offering fine arts grants to NEA members. Available to secondary (grades 6-12) school art specialists through local NEA affiliates, the grants allow fine arts educators to create and implement programs that promote learning among students at risk of school failure. The deadline for applications is Feb. 2, 2004.

On the Web: www.nfie.org/programs/finearts.htm

Law Day 2004

May 1 is the official date, but Law Day may be observed on any date, traditionally in April or May. Schools may choose to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education during this time. Students (ages 12-18) also may participate in Images of Freedom, a national photography contest to commemorate the event. Entries must be postmarked by Feb. 1, 2004. The winner receives the award in Washington, D.C., as part of Law Day 2004. A Law Day planning and resource catalog is available for teachers online.

On the Web: www.lawday.org

Mathematics/science PD opportunity

Local schools or districts may schedule workshops addressing reading strategies that enhance mathematics and science. This professional development opportunity for K-12 teachers has been developed by the Kentucky Department of Education and the Appalachia Eisenhower Regional Consortium.

The workshop will address reading strategies for vocabulary development, informational text processing and reflection for the mathematics or science classroom. Training can be ongoing or completed in one session, depending on district needs. There is a charge for each session.

On the Web: www.ael.org, click on Eisenhower Consortium in the menu on the left-hand side of the Web page.

Contact: Barbara Hicks, the Kentucky PD cadre contact at the Appalachia Eisenhower Consortium, (800) 624-9120 (toll free), hicksba@ael.org

Bulletin Board is compiled by Joy Barr.
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Commissioner's Comments

Writing, we don't have it right yet

By Gene Wilhoit, Commissioner
gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us

I have a dilemma. There is no question that being able to express oneself through writing is a critical skill. Proficient writers are prized in society and the workplace of today.

And, judging from comments of higher education professors, our current graduates are the best writers we have produced.

So, why do I agonize?

I have engaged in numerous conversations with teachers that lead me to believe that the process of portfolio writing is out of control in many schools. There are too many hours spent struggling over minor adjustments, too many rewrites, too many students being "turned off" by the writing process, too little attention to relevance of issues.

Kentucky's writing program was put into place to improve the communication abilities of public school students. The recently released Midpoint Report of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) bears out the fact that student writing in Kentucky schools is becoming more skilled.

Between 1999 and 2003, elementary school writing scores have moved from an academic index of 51.96 to 68.03. For the same time period, writing scores in middle schools have improved from 39.24 to 51.85; and high schools have gone from 56.08 to 64.45.

Those data validate what educators throughout the state have known for a long time: Kentucky's focus on writing is steadily helping many students become more confident communicators about what they are learning. It is providing important demonstrations of student knowledge. It gives students opportunities to express their understanding in every content area.

Although Kentucky's writing program is a national model and is getting strong results, some schools have not mastered best practices in writing instruction. In fact, some schools have adopted practices that are counterproductive to increasing writing proficiency and are unnecessarily time-consuming for both the teacher and the students.

I'm very concerned when I hear about instances of bad instructional practices like these going on in our schools:

- A 4th-grader with undeveloped keyboarding skills is required to produce a word-processed copy of his portfolio piece when he has not used the computer to develop and revise the document. Think of the time the student spent completing this task! Not only is it an inappropriate use of technology, it's contrary to state law. We have a regulation that prohibits using word processing to finish portfolio

writing unless it is used throughout the writing process — from development to completion.

- A middle school student makes 40 revisions to one writing piece. How frustrating for the young writer that someone didn't sit down with her and give her directions on how to improve her writing! Revision of writing is not a punishment. It should be a productive experience for emerging writers. And, there is a point of counterproductivity in terms of revisions, which I believe is closer to three than to 40.

- Upper primary students are denied recess because of misspelled words in their personal narratives. They are forced to stay in class and look up words they can't spell. That really instills a dislike for writing at an early age.

- Language arts teachers are designated the only persons responsible for producing portfolios. This won't happen in schools where all content teachers share the responsibility of developing student portfolios by providing rich writing opportunities in every course.

I know these things are happening in some Kentucky schools. My great hope is

that they won't continue. I will soon begin communicating with educators across the state to help teachers and administrators better understand best practices in writing instruction. Best practice produces writing as a natural part of a unit of study, where students share their thoughts in writing about what they've learned in science or mathematics, how they feel about a novel or what stance they take on an issue. It's important for students to write every year, not just in those years where their portfolios are submitted for scoring.

The three writing consultants in the Department of Education — Jennifer Bernhard (middle school), Cherry Boyles (high school) and Saundra Hamon (elementary) — have increased their efforts this year to help schools and districts hone writing instruction. This fall, they began using an electronic messaging system to communicate with writing cluster leaders in every school about writing, instructional strategies and professional development. The department also is exploring different ways of providing professional development — online, KET telecasts and CD-ROM sets — to give

teachers across the curriculum the tools to strengthen student writing.

Our writing consultants are looking at CATS data and collecting anecdotal information about good writing models in successful schools. You'll be reading about some of these programs in *Kentucky Teacher*.

The story on KY NET (See Page 1) shows how teachers are using writing and technology to help students develop writing skills as they share thoughts with real people for authentic purposes. Because writing is embedded in what they're studying, students can focus on the skill of communicating through the written word rather than on producing "one more piece" for their portfolios.

I'm confident that working together, we can provide our students with the kinds of experiences to become confident writers. We have a good, nationally recognized program, but there is always room for improvement. Expect to hear more from me on this topic.

To comment on this topic, phone the commissioner at (502) 564-3141 or send e-mail to gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us.



Reading buddies

Kendra Smith, a student at Charles Straub Elementary, reads to Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit during his recent visit to the Mason County school. The commissioner has visited communities throughout the state over the past six months talking to civic and community groups and visiting public schools.

Photo by Rick McComb

Problem-solving skills help students learn — and like — physics

By Joy Barr

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Walk into one of Scot Gill's physics classes at Tates Creek High School and you may see students testing for distance and accuracy in a catapult contest. Another group of students may be measuring distances using more traditional instruments, while others are working in small groups or researching on the Internet.

Gill is a proponent of inquiry-based instruction in the classroom. Students in his Fayette County classroom design and conduct experiments, present their findings to the class, and field questions from both the class and teacher. In this environment, Gill can manipulate the discussion by asking guiding questions that lead students to better understanding.

Gill is one of two Kentucky teachers who received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science teaching for 2002. The nation's highest recognition for teaching in these content areas, the award is administered by the National Science Foundation.

David Taylor, science specialist for Fayette County Public Schools and a former teacher at Tates Creek High, nominated Gill for the award. Gill did his student teaching under Taylor, who is a former Presidential Award winner.

"Scot Gill was the last student teacher I had before I left the classroom," said Taylor. "Even then, he was the most enthusiastic young teacher of all that I had supervised. He is deeply dedicated to teaching students and to providing an environment that is totally immersed in physics. He truly enjoys the students and the subject. He has a unique energy and enthusiasm that really appeals to students."

Rick Wagner, one of many physics students taught by Gill, was inspired to study mechanical engineering at the University of Kentucky. "He helped me to solve problems myself. I really like the hands-on approach that he uses," said Wagner. "He teaches a concept, and then we apply it so we can understand."

"During a lesson, I try to repeat student dialogue to ensure I understand what they are trying to say, as well as to guarantee other students hear and comprehend," said Gill. Questioning the students and



Tates Creek High School physics teacher Scot Gill watches students Andrew Jarvis and Matt Cavallo conduct an experiment that duplicates the pendulum movement of a grandfather clock.

getting them to verbalize what they are learning has improved his students' test scores, he added.

Assessment is key

To monitor student learning, Gill uses a variety of assessment techniques. During a unit, students are given daily warm-up quizzes and Internet-based homework problems. These provide instant feedback to both the students and the teacher

throughout the unit. "I know what concepts require more or less emphasis in class while students get a feel for what they understand and what concepts require more work," said Gill.

At the conclusion of the unit, students are given a written exam consisting of multiple-choice questions and open-response problems, as well as a practicum. The results of the unit exam and practicum — as well as performance on standardized exams — indicate that this

multi-mode approach is successful for students in Gill's classes. They typically score well above the national average on physics exams, he said.

Former students who go on to college e-mail Gill regularly describing how well prepared they are compared to their counterparts.

Drew Fountain, a former student now studying biochemistry at Centre College in Danville, says he learned a lot under Gill. "He forced us to explore answers and to teach ourselves. I really like how I learned to solve problems," Fountain explained.

Different ways of learning

Gill's classes conform to the National Science Standards for content. In a lesson on energy, for example, Gill addresses different learning styles in the classroom. The visual learner may make use of energy histograms, system schema and graphs to bolster understanding. Auditory learners get to hear and make verbal explanations for a variety of situations. Kinesthetic learners get to experience the stretching of springs, lifting of masses and pushing of carts to feel energy transfers.

In 2002, Gill was part of a team of teachers charged with creating an enrichment program for students identified as gifted and talented at Tates Creek High School. This was the beginning of the Accelerated Cluster for Excellence (ACE) program, in which a committee of teachers selects middle school students for the program based on test scores, grades and other factors. The students combine rigorous courses with a four-year community service requirement. These students are together for their core classes and start as freshmen taking rigorous physics courses.

Bob Gardner, principal at Tates Creek High, commends Gill's teaching skills and strategies. "He is an energetic, enthusiastic teacher who continually engages students with hands-on, real-world applications of the principles of physics. He challenges students to think critically at high levels. His students consistently score at high levels on AP testing, and they love his class."

About this award

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, the nation's highest commendation for K-12 science and mathematics teachers, recognizes a combination of sustained and exemplary work both in and outside the classroom. The program recognizes elementary and secondary teachers in alternating years. A grant of \$10,000 from the National Science Foundation is awarded to a state-level winner in each content area and includes a trip to Washington, D.C.

Awardees are selected based on excellence in teaching, leadership abilities, continuing education activities and dedication.

For information about the 2003 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, call Kentucky Department of Education mathematics consultant Ann Bartosh or science consultant Jackie Hensley at (502) 564-2106; or e-mail them at abartosh@kde.state.ky.us or jhensley@kde.state.ky.us

Scot Aaron Gill

Bachelor of Arts, Transylvania University; Master of Physics and Master of Science Education, University of Kentucky

Teacher at Tates Creek High School since 1994. Teaches physical science and physics

Contact: Scot Gill, (859) 381-3620, sgill@fayette.k12.ky.us



History and art in Union County

Kentucky connections to World War II (WWII) and the Korean War come alive within the walls of Camp Breckinridge Museum and Arts Center near Morganfield in Union County. Camp Breckinridge served as an infantry training center for American troops and housed nearly 3,000 German prisoners of war during WWII.

The restored non-commissioned officers' club has new life as a museum of WWII and Korean War memorabilia. Also on display are murals depicting scenes of Europe created between 1943 and 1945 by Daniel Mayer and Peter Heinz, German soldiers who were held at the military base.

Students can participate in an age-appropriate drama about different cultures. Retired military volunteers and local Kentucky National Guard personnel are available to speak to groups about a variety of topics from military equipment to the U.S. flag.

Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Admission for students is \$1.

On the Web: www.breckinridge-arts.org

Contact: Vicki Ricketts, (270) 389-4420, breck@henderson.net

Kentucky Center performances for students

Performances during 2004 at the Kentucky Center in Louisville offer opportunities for students and teachers to learn more about dance and rhythm.

On Feb. 19, Dance Theatre of Harlem will perform for middle and high school students in Whitney Hall at 10:30 a.m. The troupe will present a special lecture-demonstration performance.

Portland Taiko, a Japanese-American percussion ensemble, will perform March 19 at 10 a.m. at the Brown Theatre as part of the Fifth Third Bank World Rhythms Series. Taiko is the art of Japanese drumming, combining movement, rhythm, vitality and a booming sound that reflects Japan's reverence for nature.

Tickets for both performances are \$5 per student, and discounts are available for accompanying adults. Teacher guides offer introductory and follow-up activities for each performance. Bus subsidies are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

On the Web: www.kentuckycenter.org/education/ then click on "Performance Programs."

Contact: Jennifer Webb, (502) 562-0151, jwebb@kentuckycenter.org

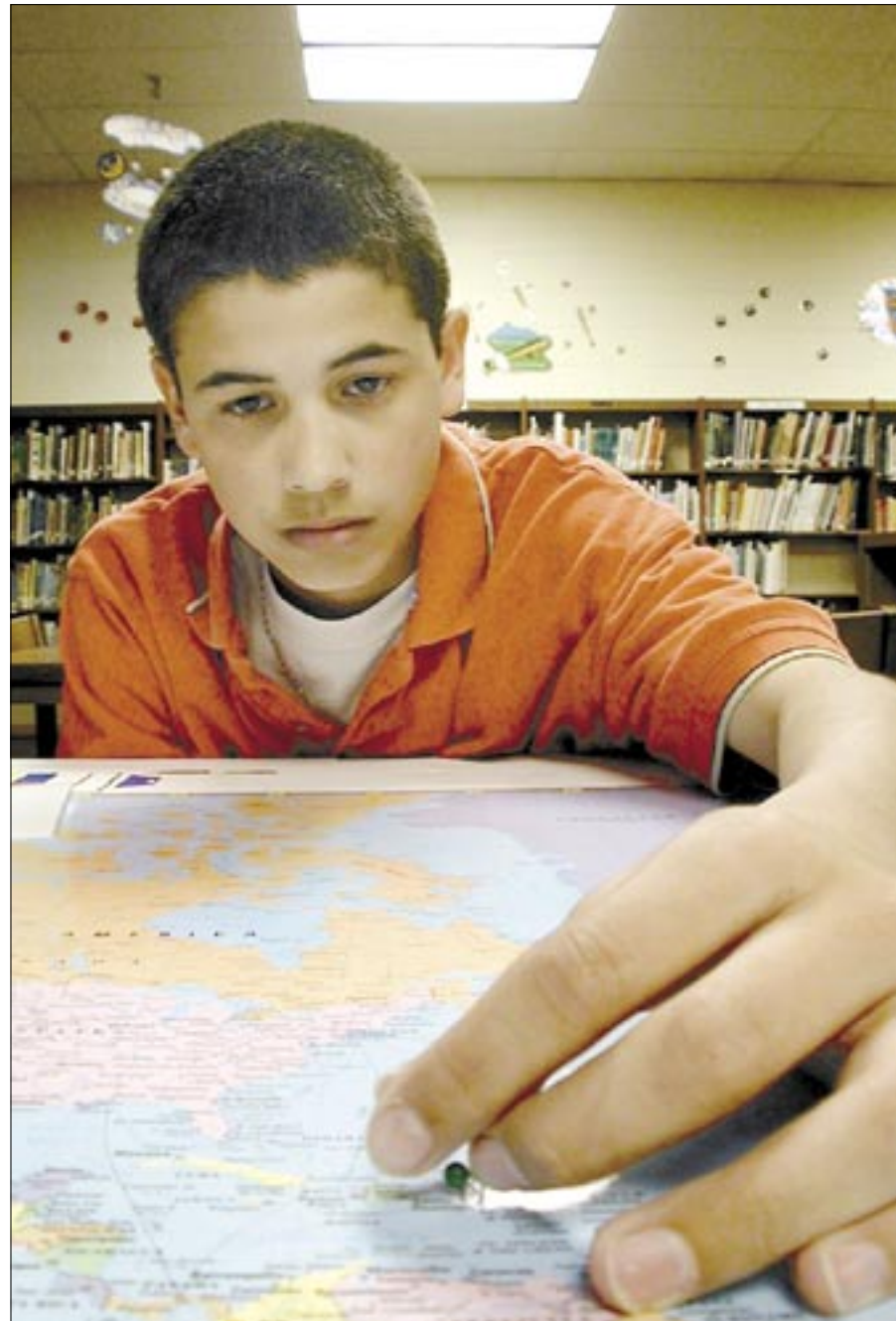


Photo by Rick McComb

Location, location, location!

National Geography Awareness Week, Nov. 17-23, is an opportunity for students to learn more about the world in which they live. Timmy Frohlich uses pins to mark the countries of origin for and visually reflect the cultural diversity of students at R.A. Jones Middle School in Boone County.

Vanderbilt offers program in teaching students with visual impairments

The Program in Visual Disabilities in the Department of Special Education at Vanderbilt University is the recipient of a federal grant to prepare teachers of students with visual impairments (children with low vision and blindness). The program seeks general education and special education teachers interested in gaining knowledge and skills, including but not limited to reading and writing with Braille, eye conditions and their educational implications, performing functional vision assessments, orientation and mobility, using optical devices and accessing technology.

This is a traditional on-campus program for course work; individual arrangements are made for practicum experiences. Classes begin at 4:10 p.m. Schedules for

practicum experiences are flexible.

Teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs) work in local schools or in special schools for students who are visually impaired. TVIs typically work one-to-one with students of all ages; some specialize in younger or older children and some with visual and additional disabilities. TVIs work closely with general education teachers, other special education teachers and families.

The program at Vanderbilt University includes full-tuition traineeships leading to a master's of education degree, admission for fall or spring semesters, part-time and full-time opportunities, and stipends for full-time students.

Contact: Anne Corn, (615) 322-2249, Anne.Corn@Vanderbilt.edu

Online resource for culturally responsive teaching

What is culturally responsive teaching? Why is it important? How can teachers accomplish it?

Get answers online at "The Knowledge Loom," a Web site subtitled "What Works in Teaching and Learning." The site's Culturally Responsive Teaching page defines the topic and explores the links between culture, curriculum and classroom instruction. It features policies, case studies, research, teaching methods and resources, plus the opportunity for online dialog.

The New England Equity Assistance Center provides content for the site, which is maintained by Brown University's Education Alliance.

On the Web: www.knowledgeloom.org and click on "Cultural Relevance in Teaching."

Changed your address?

Kentucky Teacher receives mailing addresses for all Kentucky certified classroom teachers and administrators from the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System. If you are currently employed by a Kentucky school, you can change your address in one of two ways:

- by completing a change of address form that can be downloaded from the retirement system's Web site at www.ktrs.org/ktrsresources/MEMinfo/chgaddrnew.htm
- by submitting a written request that includes your old address, new address and your social security number

Mail the form or your own written request to:

Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System
Attn: Tammy Brown
479 Versailles Road
Frankfort, KY 40601

If you are not an active teacher or administrator, e-mail your change of address to kentuckyteacher@kde.state.ky.us or send your change of address information in writing to:

Kentucky Teacher
1914 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero St.
Frankfort, KY 40601

JKG program encourages student successes

By Joy Barr

jbarr@kde.state.ky.us

What can make a student go from hating school and skipping classes to wanting to be in class and focusing on college and a career? Four words: Jobs for Kentucky's Graduates.

Jobs for Kentucky's Graduates (JKG) has made a big difference in Jennifer Juberg's school career. The Nelson County High School senior attributes the JKG program to her newly found success at school.

Before participating in the program, Juberg admits she "just didn't care." She struggled at home and hated school.

Teachers, friends and family tried to help, but she wouldn't listen. When Juberg made it to school, she often was late or skipped

classes. "I didn't have a desire to come to school," she said.

After signing up for the JKG class, she began receiving some much-needed positive feedback. Mike Rogers, a teacher and specialist for the school's JKG program, and others in the class gave Juberg that extra support and encouraged her to stay in school and find a career or go on to college.

"Now I plan to go to college and become a teacher," said Juberg. "Before JKG, I most likely would not have finished high school."

Nelson County sophomore Renee Johnson believes the JKG program has helped her a lot. The extra assistance she receives during class has encouraged and motivated her to make good grades. She now has plans for nursing school. "This class and the teachers have been a real inspiration for me," said Johnson.

JKG is a dropout-prevention, school-based program that helps students focus on attaining their high school diplomas and pursuing postsecondary education or training that will lead to success in their chosen career field. JKG is a part of the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), the national program to assist students in successful graduation and career training.

JKG also provides leadership skills training and membership in CSA, a student career association. The 48 JKG program sites operating this school year are located in regular and alternative schools, as well as in freshman academies.

As a specialist for the JKG program at Nelson County High, Rogers identifies students for the program. He then makes sure they get the individualized attention to help them gradu-

ate, obtain life skills, find a job or go on to college.

More than 80 students participate in the Nelson County program. Students may participate in the class beginning as freshmen and continue through their senior year. Many are identified as at-risk at the middle

school level.

On a typical day, students spend half of the JKG class period working on subjects such as English, mathematics or science. Students receive individualized attention to help them improve their academic classwork.

During the remaining class time, students focus on career and employability skills. One activity students might participate in is rock climbing to reinforce lessons about self-esteem and teamwork. Rogers aligns the entire curriculum of 81 JAG competencies around Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment.

Rogers also works closely with the Bardstown/Nelson County business community to identify entry-level jobs, and he helps JKG students develop skills necessary to obtain those positions. For 12 months after graduation, Rogers assists the JKG participants and employers to ensure mutual success.

An annual statewide JKG career competition and conference, held in Lexington, allows students to compete in events such as job interviews, decision-making tasks, public speaking and job applications. Team competitions, such as the carpet maze where students navigate a maze using nonverbal cues from team members, help dem-

Five Kentucky public school districts made impressive dropout reductions in the 2001-02 school year.

See Page 7.



Teacher Mike Rogers, a specialist for Nelson County High School's JKG program, helps senior Jennifer Juberg study for a chemistry exam.

Photo by Rick McComb

onstrate cooperation and team building.

Winners from the state competition attend an annual three-day student leadership conference in December in Washington D.C. In addition to visiting the nation's

capital and meeting leaders from many states, students also compete in leadership development activities and a national career competition with students from other state JAG programs. Kentucky students have won

national honors for the last five years, taking first-place honors in public speaking for the last two years and second place in cover design in 2002.

For more information about JKG

Jobs for America's Graduates Inc.
www.jag.org

Jobs for Kentucky's Graduates
www.education.ky.gov/
(enter #JKG in the keyword/search box)

Kentucky Department of Education
Dave Clusky at dclusky@kde.state.ky.us
Elizabeth "Libby" Taylor at etaylor@kde.state.ky.us
(502) 564-3678

Mike Rogers
Nelson County High School
mrogers@nelson.k12.ky.us (502) 349-7010

Five districts offer variety of programs to keep students in school

By Cathy Lindsey

clindsey@kde.state.ky.us

This summer's release of the most recent dropout rates for Kentucky public schools brought good news: Nearly 1,500 fewer students dropped out of school in 2002 than did in the 2000-2001 school year.

In fact, the most recent non-academic data available show that Kentucky's dropout rate among high school students decreased from 4.76 percent in 2001 to 3.97 percent in 2002. While 7,169 students left school without diplomas, the decrease of nearly one percentage point in a year shows schools are making progress in keeping students in school and learning.

Dropout prevention is a key component of getting schools to proficiency and beyond by 2014. The 2000 General Assembly mandated that by 2006:

- the statewide school dropout rate of 5.1 percent in 2000 will be cut by 50 percent

- no school will have an annual dropout rate exceeding 5 percent

- each county will have 30 percent fewer adults ages 16 to 24 without a high school diploma or GED

The Kentucky Department of Education believes school and district dropout prevention programs must involve strong partnerships among parents, teachers and the community. According to Leon Swarts, a dropout prevention consultant for the department, schools, parents, and communities must work together to prevent students from dropping out of school. All students must be encouraged and motivated to understand that a high school diploma is the first step toward transitioning to adult life.

There is no one end-all, beat-all solution to prevent students from dropping out of school. Many schools use a combination of strategies to keep students in school and on target for graduation. Five districts with impressive dropout reductions in the 2001-2002 school year use similar strategies that they customize to meet the needs of their students.

Early identification

If dropout indicators such as poor attendance, retention and achievement are identified early, prevention strategies like mentoring and counseling can be used to decrease risk factors and barriers that often prevent students from succeeding in school, noted Swarts.

Cumberland County School District, which posted a 3.6 percent decrease in dropouts in 2002, uses Dropout Prevention Grant money to focus on middle school students and high school freshmen. Efforts at both levels promote not only academic success, but also help students succeed in their surroundings as well.

"We do everything we can to help stu-



Photo by Rick McComb

Frankfort High School social worker Susanne Dobner facilitates a session with incoming freshmen and two senior mentors to help the younger students reduce anxiety concerning high school. The school's mentoring contributed to a 4 percent decrease in dropouts in 2002.

dents feel as comfortable as possible with the transition to high school," said Tammy Wright, dropout prevention coordinator.

Transition to high school

Franklin County reduced its dropout rate by 2.5 percent in 2002. A Freshman Academy in each of the district's two high schools targets at-risk students in what is considered a very critical year — their first in high school.

This "school within a school" concept allows participants to spend the day together in a smaller classroom setting. It offers a more relaxed atmosphere and the opportunity for more one-on-one teaching. Students receive instruction in the basic high school curriculum. They also learn study skills, time management strategies and different approaches to learning.

Mentoring programs

Peer mentoring at Frankfort High School (Frankfort Independent) contributed to a dramatic 4 percent decrease in dropouts in 2002. Upperclassmen are trained to provide a positive influence for the younger students and to be on the lookout for students who might have problems in class or adjusting to high school. They then are paired with freshmen to form teams that meet four times per quarter with a faculty advisor.

"There is an ongoing dialogue between administrators, teachers, parents and kids," said guidance counselor Joretta Crowe. "We really know our kids and where they come from."

Mentoring by "committed teachers" has been effective for Gallatin County High School students, said guidance counselor Beth Ingraham. The school's dropout rate decreased 5 percent in 2002.

"We get to know our students," Ingra-

ham said. "I know this is their future, so we must teach them that they've got to have a plan."

Credit recovery

Department of Education studies have found that if a student is retained for one year, there is a 40 percent chance that he or she will drop out. The probability increases to 90 percent if the student is retained for a second year.

That makes credit recovery an important facet of successful dropout prevention programs. Most schools offer credit recovery opportunities during the school day and at non-traditional times.

Gallatin County provides a "second chance" program at the end of each semester as well as during the summer. The district also offers a Workforce Investment Act youth program in partnership with the Northern Kentucky Development District. This program identifies students who have educational barriers to learning. Students attend a class during the school day and receive one-on-one instruction to help them recover their credit.

In Cumberland County, students attend a scheduled class during school, three days a week. They also have opportunities for after-school and summer sessions to make up failed classes.

"Bringing them into smaller groups has really proven to bring out the best in these students. The ones who fell by the wayside before tend to become leaders in the small group atmosphere," said Wright, the dropout prevention coordinator. "Some students feel as if they get lost in the mix, so the more individual help you can give, the better."

Alternative education

Frankfort High School keeps students

interested in school by offering an alternative program. A participant in the Jobs for Kentucky's Graduates program, the Wilkinson Street alternative school also helps provide food, clothing, shelter and a positive learning environment. After those needs are met, students can focus on academics, said counselor Crowe.

Preparing for the work force helps students understand the need to stay in school. Many districts use career fairs, school-to-work activities and cooperative work programs with local businesses to help students research career options.

Noncollege-bound students at Franklin County High can attend the Career and Technical Center. They receive training in fields as varied as medicine and technology.

Truancy mediation

Frankfort High School participates in the Excellence Through Attendance Program (ETAP). This truancy program involves family court, the school's family resource center, teachers, parents and students.

Selected students and their parents meet twice a month with school and court officials to review attendance, grades and discipline. As a team, they find out why the student is not getting to school and work to correct that behavior.

"The committee is able to make out the whole picture of not only what's going on in the classroom, but also in the student's life," said Crowe, Frankfort High counselor. "This shows the kids that somebody cares."

The Walton-Verona Independent School District has maintained a zero dropout rate for the past four years. The district utilizes the services of School and Families Empowered (SAFE) Agent Larry Davis and school resource officer Jan Wuchner to keep students in school. They work together in school and during home visits to help students who have problems getting to school.

While many strategies can be used to prevent students from dropping out of school, Swarts believes that if teachers differentiate curricula, instruction and assessment, many students will not experience academic failure — and boredom — and will remain in school to complete graduation requirements.

Assistant Superintendent Gene Kirchner of the Walton-Verona School District agrees. That district boasts an average daily attendance slightly less than 97 percent. Kirchner says schools can't separate the dropout rate from the reasons why students attend school.

"You must have a curriculum that's engaging kids," Kirchner said. "Give them a purpose to be at school. Make your school a good place to be, that's inviting and meaningful."

Contact: Leon Swarts, (502) 564-3678, lswarts@kde.state.ky.us

Students proceed to read with Lewis and Clark study

By Cathy Lindsey

clindsey@kde.state.ky.us

Meeting Native Americans, hunting buffalo and being chased by grizzly bears all makes for an adventurous journey. At least that's what Trunnell Elementary principal Betty Stokes is counting on as her students discover what Meriwether Lewis and William Clark endured 200 years ago as they explored the western frontier of the United States.

Like the famous explorers, these Jefferson County students have embarked on a historic journey of their own called "We Proceeded On With Lewis & Clark." This school-wide, three-year study of the Lewis and Clark expedition will parallel the celebrated frontier excursion with hopes of not only raising student interest in local history, but also ultimately raising scores on state assessments. "We proceeded on" is a phrase used frequently in journals kept by members of the expedition.

"I want to bring up those reading scores," Stokes said. "We're hoping the students will be so engrossed with Lewis and Clark, they will be more interested in reading books about them."

Using children's trade books about Lewis and Clark, teachers are integrating reading with the national celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition's bicentennial in an effort to inspire and motivate the students.

"Everything about the expedition is too perfect," Stokes said.

Not only is the Lewis and Clark story filled with examples of the traits — leadership, teamwork, diversity, endurance and acceptance — Trunnell teachers want to instill in students, it also lends itself to everyday classroom lessons in reading, history, art, science, mathematics, geography and writing, Stokes explained.

The journey for the faculty began last year with the reading and discussion of J.A. Thom's "From Sea to Shining Sea." Teachers also trained with National Geographic's Lewis and Clark GeoKit software package and have scheduled professional development workshops throughout the duration of the project.

The integration of content areas comes full circle as the faculty uses a curriculum framework based on Different Ways of Knowing (DWOK). With the help of the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning, the teachers created DWOK activities and lessons that connect the Lewis and Clark experience to Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment.

Students have created Lewis and Clark bulletin boards that represent what each class is studying. For example, as a compare and contrast activity, Laurie Callander's early primary class bulletin board presents the members of the Corps of Discovery and what they had to do get along with one another. In comparison, the board also shows the members of her class and what they must do to get along



Student Jose Garza works on a prairie dog assignment as part of the Trunnell Elementary schoolwide study of the Lewis and Clark expedition into the western United States. Garza has responsibility for the classroom mascot, "Buffy" the buffalo, for a week.

with other classmates.

Other boards display student keelboat sketches, Native American ceremonial masks and various writing projects.

Fourth-grade teacher Chris Clarkson had her students write a letter to President Thomas Jefferson accepting a job with the expedition and providing a list of various items they would need for the journey. As the project continues, students will keep a journal as if they were the explorers themselves.

Arts and humanities teacher Bob Myers will show students how the experience has been recorded through art. Journals kept by members of the expedition serve as a reference for artists, he explained.

"Students are learning to draw," Myers

said. "They get the idea of how the culture was captured and recorded without modern technology."

The students also will put their performing arts skills to work as the school prepares to present a musical production of "The Adventures of Lewis & Clark" in May 2005.

Tracking timelines, mapping the trail and the bulletin boards are projects for every classroom. More activities scheduled include making mobiles of items important to survival, creating a mural of animals, plants and land formations discovered, drawing items used as gifts to the Native Americans, creating a trivia game about the expedition, charting cold temperatures, studying different Native

American tribes, and report and journal writing.

Each grade level is focused on different aspects of the expedition:

- P1 and P2 students focus on self and family. They will discuss how the members of the Corps of Discovery coped with leaving their families for the long journey.

- P3 students study community. They will learn how expedition members, each with a different background, had a talent or skill that was important to the trip.

- P4 students study local history. Three of the men on the expedition were from the Trunnell community.

- Fourth graders focus on Kentucky history. Nine of the men on the trip were from Kentucky, including William Clark.

- Fifth graders study American history. They will study the impact of the expedition on America as it opened a Pacific waterway for trade and commerce.

Diversity is taught at all grade levels. Students study how the Corps, which included a black man, a Native American woman, and men of French, Irish and English descent worked and lived together even though they came from different cultural and social backgrounds.

Just as the members of the expedition wrote in their journals, "we proceeded on," Trunnell students will proceed on this journey through fall 2006 earning academic patches each year of the study.

Contact: Betty Stokes, (502) 485-8337, bstokes1@jefferson.k12.ky.us

Lewis and Clark Web sites

www.teachlewis-clark.org/geokit.htm

www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/matrix.html

www.sierraclub.org (click on Lewis & Clark)

www.lewisandclark.com

www.pbs.org/lewisandclark

www.surfnetkids.com/lewisclark.htm

www.nationalgeographic.com/features/97/west

www.lewisandclarktrail.com

www.lewisandclark1803.com

<http://easternhs.ka.net/lc/default.htm>

MILKEN from Page 1

Embry has 14 years of teaching experience and is certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. His teaching methods are described as “research-based” and students at the high school often request placement in his mathematics classes.

He is described as “very engaging, innovative and caring” on his nomination form. Embry earned a bachelor’s degree from Murray State University and a master’s degree from the University of Louisville.

Coleman and Embry will join 98 educators from 46 other states at the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles next May.



Rebecca Coleman talks with TV reporters after being named a Milken Educator.

Checks for \$25,000 will be presented to the educators at the conference. There are no restrictions on use of the award.

The Milken Family Foundation was established in 1985, and the first awards were given in 1987. Forty-two Kentucky educators have received the Milken Award since Kentucky began participating in 1993.

The Milken Educator Network is a voluntary association of nearly 2,000 Milken Educators and other exemplary educators and business leaders from across the country who are dedicated to improving teacher quality and utilizing research and expertise to shape education policy at state and local levels.



Keith Embry receives congratulations after learning he was named a Milken Educator.

Photos by Rick McComb

CATS from Page 1

particularly interesting,” Commissioner Wilhoit continued. “The percentage of novice performers at each grade level has dropped since 2002. Plus, writing scores show the largest gains from 2002 to 2003 in the middle and high school levels and the second largest in the elementary level. It’s an indication that Kentucky’s focus on writing — from the early grades through high school — is beginning to pay off.”

Even though schools showed improvement in most subject and grade levels, Wilhoit said he has some concerns about what the data show.

“The slight drop in scores in science and social studies at the high school level is bothersome,” he said. “We’ll be analyzing the information and working with schools and districts to help them raise those levels.

“I’m also concerned about those schools with low overall accountability index scores. It’s going to be very difficult for schools with low indices to make the kind of progress necessary to reach proficiency by 2014. We’ll have a better idea of how those schools are performing at the end of this accountability cycle, but I suspect that many will struggle to progress,” the commissioner said.

Preliminary analysis of the achievement gaps between ethnic, socio-economic and disability status groups show that, while gaps still exist, slight progress has been made to bring achievement levels closer.

“Our elementary schools are ahead of middle and high schools in both raising achievement levels and closing the gaps between specific groups of students,” Wilhoit said. “At the elementary level in 2003, nearly every subgroup of students is performing at higher levels than in 2002. We also see some progress in middle and high schools — particularly in the scores of students with disabilities.”

Scores represent the first half of the data that will provide accountability judgments for public schools in 2004 under the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System. Test data released in October includes subject-area scores from the spring 2003 tests and overall accountability indices for each school and district.

The accountability indices include results from the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills and nonacademic indicators—dropout, attendance, retention and successful transition to adult life rates.

KY from Page 1

“I found it has been an exceptional way to teach kids about audience from a different perspective than it had been taught previously,” Miller said. “It’s all about literary purpose.”

In 1999, the Kentucky Department of Education entered a fellowship program with the Bread Loaf School of English. The summer graduate program at Middlebury College (Vermont) offers courses in literature, the teaching of writing, creative writing and theater. Participants become known as Bread Loaf teachers.

One component of the Bread Loaf program is BreadNet, a national computer network that links the classrooms of Bread Loaf teachers. The primary goal of the network is to encourage collaboration among all Bread Loaf teachers and their students.

Kentucky is developing its own writing model based on the Bread Loaf program, KY Net. Last spring, five Kentucky Bread Loaf teachers were chosen as part of a pilot program to mentor five Kentucky Writing Program fellows. The teacher partners encourage exchanges between classrooms not only across the state, but across grade levels as well.

KY Net mentor Joan Altman, an English and creative writing teacher at Nelson County High School, partners with 4th-grade teacher Kathy Heaberlin of Russell-McDowell Intermediate School (Russell Independent). They are conducting an imaginative writing exchange based on fable writing.

Each class exchanges ideas: Students talk about their fable’s moral, characters and setting. Students then choose from among this list of story ideas and draft a fable. The student who sends the ideas reviews the draft and provides feedback to the writer for revisions.

The revised fables are then e-mailed back to the conferencing partner who develops a “product” to go with the fable written for him/her. These products can be illustrations, sequels, videos, posters or dioramas. The creations will be exchanged when Heaberlin’s class visits the Nelson County school in December.

“The greatest benefit I have seen so far from this program is the enthusiasm the children have displayed,” Heaberlin said of her 4th graders. “They have taken pride

in their work knowing that a high school student would be reading and responding to their writing.”

The high school students also have benefited from the feedback of the younger ones.

“Writing for the fourth graders has taught me about the demands of the audience; what they look for, what makes a piece satisfying,” said Megan Mackin, a junior at Nelson County High.

Writing exchanges between students offer a vital, authentic purpose for thought, expression and action. According to Altman, besides improvement on whatever the writing task is at hand, there is carry-over into other work.

“We spend quite a bit of time reflecting on the process and the product,” Altman said. “Perhaps, most importantly, exchanges make writing social again, not an activity of isolation.”

Cherry Boyles, writing program consultant for the Kentucky Department of Education, agrees, “The exchange process takes writing where it’s meant to be, beyond the portfolio.”

Students are able to use written language as they will in life — to participate, collaborate, analyze and create. “Students need opportunities to communicate,” Boyles said. “The goal is to make students not only proficient writers, but also good thinkers.”

Kentucky teachers already involved in KY Net look to this program to enrich their classroom instruction. They hope to see the network continue and grow.

“Networking with other teachers across our state is a tremendous resource,” Heaberlin said. “If we live in our own little classroom and never reach beyond, our students as well as ourselves, miss out on a lot of valuable opportunities.”

Teachers not participating in the Bread Loaf Network can replicate the electronic writing exchange model using the KETS global e-mail network, Boyles said. She suggests that teachers post their interest in finding a partner to develop writing exchanges with the KYWRITE listserv at KYWRITE@LSV.UKY.EDU.

Contact: Tim Miller, (606) 836-8014, tjmiller@raceland.k12.ky.us or Cherry Boyles, (502) 564-2106, cboyles@kde.state.ky.us

Talk to Us!

Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.

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Fax: (502) 564-6470

Write: Kentucky Teacher
1914 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero St.
Frankfort, KY 40601

WANTED

from Page 1

Kentucky will add augmented norm-referenced tests to CATS assessments in reading for grades 3, 5, 6 and 8 and in mathematics for grades 3, 4, 6 and 7. Content for these grades has been aligned to determine what will be assessed on the new tests.

The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) already is used to test Kentucky students in grades 3, 6 and 9 each spring. Open-response questions — and to the degree needed for technical purposes, some multiple-choice items — that appropriately address grade-specific content will be developed to augment the CTBS in mathematics and reading for grades 3-8.

During September, Kentucky educators vertically aligned mathematics and reading core content to help in the development of those test questions. An inclusive group of teachers from all areas of the state, many content areas and all impacted grade levels were involved in the two-day alignment process. Participants also represented mathematics and reading professional organizations, content advisory committees, university mathematics and mathematics education programs, and summer content academies sponsored by the Kentucky

Department of Education.

“When creating the alignment, one phrase that was constantly repeated was ‘What would work for the whole state?’” said Faith Graham, a 7th-grade mathematics teacher at Iroquois Middle in Jefferson County. “We relied heavily on the Program of Studies to develop the alignment because that is a document that every mathematics teacher should be relying on statewide to help plan their lessons.”

Tom Stull, a high school mathematics teacher at Ludlow (Independent) High School, was one of two content teachers on the reading alignment team. “I believe the (reading) alignment is thorough,” he said, “but it still allows teachers the flexibility they need to diversify instruction based on the needs of the students in their classes.”

Penny Roberts, curriculum specialist for Muhlenberg County Schools and a former mathematics teacher, believes the vertically aligned content documents will help teachers in their quests to close achievement gaps in mathematics and reading. “The new alignment will give teachers further guidance for planning standards-based instructional activities and units of study,” she said.

“Teachers need to look at the

documents closely so they can meet in departments and district groups to discuss how they can make sure their core content alignment will prepare students for the testing in 2005,” Graham said.

Stull agreed. “Teachers need to look closely at what will be assessed at each grade level and what their students are responsible for learning,” he said.

These three participants in the alignment process say comments from teachers in all content areas are a vital part of the vertical alignment process. “This is powerful,” Roberts added. “This means that Kentucky teachers have been empowered to help shape the future assessment in the state of Kentucky.”

For more information on vertical alignment of the mathematics and reading core content, contact Kentucky Department of Education mathematics and reading consultants at (502) 564-2106 or by e-mail:

Jim Austin, mathematics consultant, jaustin@kde.state.ky.us

Ann Bartosh, mathematics consultant, abartosh@kde.state.ky.us

Rene Matthews, reading consultant, rmatthew@kde.state.ky.us

Read anything good lately?

Passage may be just what’s needed to assess student reading skills

By Faun S. Fishback

ffishbac@kde.state.ky.us

Have you ever put together a bookcase in record time because the instructions were so clear and concise any 10 year old could follow them?

Perhaps you’ve picked up a brochure in a doctor’s office that contained information you later used in your classroom.

As an educator, you’re probably on constant alert for written information that can be used in your class or that your students might be interested in reading. Why not take your experienced eye for spotting good reading passages a step further and help students across the state by submitting those passages for use on the Kentucky Core Content Tests in reading? The Kentucky Department of Education and its test developer, WestEd, are looking for appropriate reading passages for future state assessments. The use of augmented norm-referenced tests in grades 3-8 beginning in 2005 will double the need for reading passages, according to Rene Matthews, the department’s high school reading consultant.

The department is searching for reading passages that will assess specific skills and strategies for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10. Whether a passage is an excerpt or the full text, it should address literary, informational, persuasive or practical/workplace reading skills and strategies. Once a passage is submitted for inclusion in the state assessments, it can no longer be used for classroom instruction until after the passage appears on a

state assessment.

“Ideally, teachers can reach into their filing cabinets for great reading passages they’ve briefly retired because they began using new materials in their instruction,” said Matthews. “In other words, teachers should submit passages they are not currently using with students.”

Complete information about selecting and submitting reading passages as well as the proper forms on which to submit the reading passages can be found on the department’s Web site at www.education.ky.gov. Insert “#passages” in the keyword/search box at the top of the page.

The length of each passage should be considered to ensure that students have adequate time to read and answer questions during test administration. Guidelines provided by the testing contractor suggest these minimum and maximum word counts for a passage:

- Grade 4: 500 to 1,100 words
- Grade 7: 500 to 1,500 words
- Grade 10: 600 to 2,000 words

The test developer needs the title of the passage, the title of the publication where the passage appeared, the author’s name, publisher and publisher’s address, date of publication, page number(s), ISBN number and where you found the passage (in your personal collection, school or public library or other source). The test developer is responsible for obtaining permission from the copyright holder to use each reading passage in state assessments.

Contact: Rene Matthews, (502) 564-2106, rmatthew@kde.state.ky.us

State board continues work on NCLB compliance

By Lisa Y. Gross

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The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and Kentucky’s school assessment and accountability system had the attention of the Kentucky Board of Education at its October meeting.

The board discussed four options for earlier reporting of Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) data, which will be used to provide information required by NCLB.

The Assessment and Accountability Committee, which reviewed the options, did not recommend a specific action.

The committee instead recommended, and the board adopted, a set of principles to guide staff and the board in future decisions about meeting NCLB reporting timelines.

In other NCLB-related actions, the board agreed to accept modifications to the “other academic indicator” required by NCLB; discussed the “participation rate” requirements of NCLB. The board will take action on more NCLB requirements at its Dec. 10-11 meeting in Frankfort.

Board information is available at www.education.ky.gov. Enter “#KBE” in the keyword/search box.

Examples of Vertical Alignment

The vertical alignment of Kentucky’s reading and mathematics content in grades 3-8 tells teachers the skills and knowledge that will be assessed on state tests and how instruction should build those skills from one year to the next tested grade.

Mathematics

Number/Computation — Students will describe properties of, give examples of and apply to real-world or mathematical situations:

Grade 3 (MA-3-1.1.3) — odd and even numbers, multiples

Grade 4 (MA-4-1.1.3) — odd and even numbers, multiples and factors

Grade 5 (MA-E-1.1.3) — odd and even numbers, composite and prime numbers, multiples and factors

Reading

Informational Reading

Grade 6 — demonstrate knowledge of organizational patterns (e.g., cause and effect, comparison, contrast, sequence) to understand a passage

Grade 7 — apply knowledge of organizational patterns (e.g., cause and effect, comparison, contrast, sequence) to understand a passage

Grade 8 — analyze the organizational patterns in a passage (e.g., cause and effect, comparison, contrast, sequence)

Leadership Letter

Compiled by Joy Barr
jbarr@kde.state.ky.us

Commonwealth Diploma Program now accepting applications

Kentucky high schools can apply now to participate in the 2003-04 Commonwealth Diploma Program. The program promotes academic excellence and gives students the opportunity to be recognized for exceptional academic efforts.

Schools planning to participate in this year's program should designate either a school- or district-level Commonwealth Diploma Coordinator to administer the program. The designated coordinator should complete the appropriate forms — available for download on the Kentucky Department of Education Web site — and return them by Nov. 25 to Brenda Withrow, Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Curriculum Development, 18th Floor, Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601. Forms can be downloaded at www.education.ky.gov on the Internet. Insert #CD in the keyword/search box and click "search."

Contact: Michael Miller, (502) 564-2106, mjmiller@kde.state.ky.us

Education resource showcase is Nov. 7

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Federal Interagency Commission on Education are hosting a "Federal Showcase of K-12 Education Resources" Nov. 7 at Morehead State University.

The showcase will feature financial and other resources available for schools, museums and libraries from federal agencies such as the departments of Education and Defense, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the National Science Foundation. The showcase is open to the public but is particularly targeting K-12 school administrators and administrators from local museums and libraries.

Registration is \$25, which includes breakfast and lunch.



Photo by Rick McComb

Putting issues on the table

Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit, lower right, meets with Paris Independent Superintendent Ron Hickey and district board members to discuss budget concerns and how they will affect education. The commissioner has been meeting with civic, community and professional groups throughout the state — as well as education leaders — to discuss the challenges facing Kentucky public schools as a result of budget constraints in recent years.

The fee is waived for participants from ARC-designated distressed counties.

Register online: www.kasa.org
For more information, call (502) 875-3411 or contact Shirley LaFavers, shirley@kasa.org or Wanda Darland, wandad@kasa.org by e-mail.

New guide helps school leaders discuss NCLB

"Communicating NCLB: A Principal's Desktop Guide" is designed to help principals talk with parents and the public about the federal No Child Left Behind Act and schools in need of improvement. The guide contains talking points, frequently asked questions regarding NCLB, key provisions of the law, timelines and much more.

On the Web: www.principals.org/advocacy/esea.cfm

Education data posted on Web

"The Digest of Education Statistics 2002" is now available to download online. The annual publication, compiled by The

National Center for Education Statistics, provides a compilation of statistical information covering pre-kindergarten through graduate school. Topics include the number of schools and colleges; teachers; enrollments; graduates; educational attainment; finances; federal funds for education; employment and income of graduates; libraries; technology; and international comparisons.

On the Web: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003060>

Kentucky schools win Blue Ribbon honor for 2003

T.C. Cherry Elementary in the Bowling Green Independent School District has been named a "No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School" by the U. S. Department of Education. T.C. Cherry met both of the criteria upon which schools could be selected for the honor, although the school only had to meet one. Selection is based on either of two assessment criteria:

- Schools that have at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds

that dramatically improve student performance to a high level on state assessment or assessments referenced against national norms at a particular grade, as determined by the state's chief state school officer; and,

- Schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent on state tests.

Additionally, T.C. Cherry met the Adequate Yearly Progress designation required by the No Child Left Behind Act. Three nonpublic schools in Kentucky also received the Blue Ribbon School designation: Covington Latin School, St. Raphael The Archangel School in Louisville and Villa Madonna Academy

High School in Villa Hills.

Education is conference focus

The Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center will host its 10th annual conference Nov. 18 at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville. "At the Crossroads: Prospects for Kentucky's Educational Future From Preschool to Postsecondary" is this year's theme. The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority and the Student Loan People sponsor the conference. Registration is \$40 and must be postmarked by Nov. 10.

Register online: www.kltprc.net/conference2003.htm

KENTUCKY TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE

March 4-6, 2004

Send a team of five to KTLC, and a principal or other administrator receives free registration.

Watch for your registration brochure in the December/January issue of *Kentucky Teacher* for details.

Pulaski County students explore their gifts and talents



Northern Middle School 6th grader Celeste Bradley draws while listening to different types of music to see its effect on her artwork. Celeste is one of 230 middle school students participating in the Pulaski County EGAT program.

Photo by Rick McComb

By Joy Barr

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Imagine being given a day to explore, enhance and expand your talents in the arts, writing and leadership. That's what some students in Pulaski County Schools get once a semester on EGAT Day.

EGAT, Exploring Gifts and Talents, is a relatively new program that improves instruction and student success with the district's gifted and talented students. These students attend districtwide workshops during the school day at elementary, middle and high school levels.

Activities — from jewelry design to dance — keep students interested, challenged and engaged in learning through creative and higher-order processes.

Designed to complement and differentiate the curriculum, EGAT days feature presentations and performances by community leaders and professional artists. Past participants include newspaper reporters, photographers, the county judge-executive, a dance instructor, a guitar instructor, a jewelry designer, bank officials, college staff, a writing teacher, a calligrapher and motivational speakers.

Lisa Milby, a jewelry designer, offers her day to the students. "It is a wonderful program. It is interesting to see the talents of the students," she said.

These community consultants share their expertise in workshop sessions purposefully aligned to the strengths, interests and abilities of gifted and talented students. Consultants are encouraged to integrate references to core content as meaningful reinforcement of the district's curricular focus.

During a typical EGAT Day, students spend the morning in a general session and participate in workshops on subjects ranging from jewelry design and creative writing to leadership and dance. In the afternoon, they often attend a paid professional performance arranged through the Kentucky Arts Council.

Participating students have been formally identified as gifted and talented in one or more of the following areas: leadership, creativity, creative writing, visual arts, music, dance or drama. EGAT sessions provide students with participatory enrichment activities in each area.

Christine Dodson, a 5th grader at Southern Elementary, has attended EGAT Day sessions for two years. She says she "likes EGAT because of the extra involvement and also how I've developed many friendships."

Jamie Large, another 5th grader at Southern, attended her first EGAT Day last spring. "It gives me an opportunity

to express myself and to learn some new things," she said about her positive experiences in the program. "It was nice to be able to be with other students that enjoy similar things."

Superintendent Tim Eaton decided two years ago to beef up the gifted program in Pulaski County Schools. The local school board approved positions for a district coordinator and six specialists to serve the county's gifted children.

"Gifted students can develop their full potential only when their strengths are identified and supported," said Janice Fraley, district gifted and talented services coordinator. "Districts must take it upon themselves to provide students with opportunities aligned with their needs, interests and abilities. From funding from our board to our staff writing grants to our community members providing their expertise — it takes a commitment from everyone.

"We are blessed with inspiration from students, support from parents and involvement from the community. How could we not be enthusiastically committed to excellence?" asked Fraley.

Lynn Ashbrook, a specialist for the district, said the strong gifted program also has had an academic impact. "Beyond that," she said, "students are fulfilling the district's ultimate mission by exiting high school with lofty goals to continue their pursuits in higher education and to become lifelong learners and productive citizens."

In 2002, EGAT won the Public Education Achieves in Kentucky (PEAK) Award, presented by the Kentucky School Boards Association.

For more information about EGAT, visit the Pulaski County Web site at www.pulaski.net or call Janice Fraley at (606) 679-1123 or send e-mail to jfraley@pulaski.net.



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